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590

How Storekeepers and Manufacturers Can Help to Prevent the Spread of Tuberculosis.

Published for Gratuitous Distribution by the Pennsylvania Society
for the Prevention of Tuberculosis.

TRACT No. 4.

Tuberculosis is the most prevalent disease of civilized life. It causes over one hundred thousand deaths a year in the United States alone. One of our fellow citizens dies of it, on an average every five minutes; and for everyone that dies there is untold suffering and inexpressible sorrow and heartache. What a terrible plague. "What an affliction of our people." But the plague has existed from time immemorial and we have grown hardhearted. We have become stoics in the face of an enemy whom we did not know how to conquer.

Tuberculosis is most generally recognized by the people under the form of consumption. It however also manifests itself under many other forms, chiefly marasmus, white swelling, scrofula, lupus, meningitis and peritonitis. Its great prevalence has earned for it the soubriquet "Great white plague."

Science has at last discovered the secret which makes it possible to abate this decimating pest. Tuberculosis can be stamped out in a comparatively short time by the practical application of the knowledge which has been obtained about the disease within the last few years. It is now demonstrable that the disease is contagious and consequently preventable. The contagium resides in the broken down tissue given off by a tubercular subject in the form of expectoration or discharge and is strictly confined to it. Prompt sterilization of such infectious matter, before it can gain entrance into the bodies of the healthy is all that is necessary for the prevention of tuberculosis.

In practical every-day life the best way to guard against the spread of tuberculosis is to insist that all persons who have or

How to Prevent the Spread of Tuberculosis.

may have tuberculosis of the lungs spit into spittoons or spittups and wipe their mouths with paper handkerchiefs. The use of linen or silk handkerchiefs or of cloths of any material as receptacles for expectoration or for wiping the mouth after expectoration, is a most pernicious practice and should be discouraged and prohibited as far as possible. The reason why this practice is so fraught with danger is because every time the handkerchief or cloth is used the dried infectious particles which it already contains are set free into the air. These may not only reinfect the patient but may infect the persons with whom he comes in contact.

Owing to the tedious and long-drawn out course of tuberculosis the majority of persons suffering from it are compelled to earn their living during the active stage of the disease. Consumptives are therefore to be found in all our places of industry, in our stores, in our factories, laundries, restaurants in short everywhere where human effort ministers to the wants of others. In all such places their presence, unless precautions are taken, is a source of danger to fellow employees and to the public at large.

What is the remedy? At first blush it appears so harsh as to be forbidding. It is not so however. In the first place the danger can be much lessened by the enforcement in workshops and stores of certain simple rules. Employees should be forbidden to expectorate anywhere except into spittoons. In order that such a rule can be enforced stationary spittoons should be placed where they can be conveniently used by the employees and yet not be seen by the public. In stores such spittoons might be placed in closets or boxes. For wiping the mouth paper napkins should be supplied. This trifling precautionary measure would almost do away with the danger of spreading the disease among fellow employees and customers.

A more efficient and more humane preventive measure, however, would be some provision for the rational treatment of all consumptive employees. A person suffering from typhoid fever or some other severe illness is promptly removed to a hospital and everyone's charity, the City and State included, is enlisted to maintain him there until he is well or dies. Why should not the same be done for a person suffering from tuberculosis? All that

How to Prevent the Spread of Tuberculosis.

is necessary is to arouse the public conscience to a full recognition of the duty involved and it will be done. A fair proportion of consumptives could be cured and restored to lives of usefulness by prompt and early treatment in a properly equipped hospital. The majority of them would no doubt die, but the prevention of the spread of the disease among their fellow employees and the public would be accomplished by their removal to a hospital, and they would at least be humanely cared for during their illness. Employers of course cannot do this work by themselves, but they can help do it.

Organized effort is being made to bring relief to this large class of sufferers and to prevent the extension of the disease. Let every employer contribute his mite to the movement by giving intelligent, thoughtful consideration to how he can lessen the evil among his own employees and the aggregate result will be most gratifying. The Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Tuberculosis will always be glad to coöperate with employers either by supplying tracts free of charge or giving information on any subject desired.

Should you desire to become a member of the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Tuberculosis, you can do so by sending your name and one dollar to the Treasurer.

Address

TREASURER OF PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY FOR THE
PREVENTION OF TUBERCULOSIS,

ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Substances that can be used as Germicides in Spittoons and Spit Cups :

1st. **Carbolic Acid.** A strong solution should be used. If economy is not an object a 33 per cent. solution should be used. A weaker solution, from 15 per cent. to 20 per cent. will answer however.

2d. **Corrosive Sublimate.** This should always be used in combination with tartaric acid, citric acid, or some other preparation that will prevent the coagulation of albumen. The strength of the solution of corrosive sublimate should be one to five hundred.

3d. **Ordinary Lye** out of which soap is made. A strong solution of this should be used.

TRACTS PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY :

Tract No. 1.

How to Avoid Contracting Tuberculosis (Consumption).

Tract No. 2.

How Persons Suffering from Tuberculosis Can Avoid Giving the Disease to Others.

Tract No. 3.

How Hotel Keepers Can Aid in Preventing the Spread of Tuberculosis.

Tract No. 4.

How Storekeepers and Manufacturers Can Help to Prevent the Spread of Tuberculosis.